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Military Tourism: a bibliometric and content analysis.

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Master in Hospitality and Tourism Management

Supervisor:

PhD, Daniela Penela, Integrated Researcher.
ISCTE Business Research Unit (BRU-Iscte).

September, 2023



BUSINESS
SCHOOL

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Acknowledgments

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Resumo

Nos últimos tempos, tem sido notável o aumento do interesse dos turistas por história militar e patrimonial, o que tem impulsionado o crescimento da popularidade do Turismo Militar. No mundo acadêmico especificamente, este tipo de turismo tem sido um ponto de interesse entre vários investigadores. Um dos propósitos desta dissertação consta em analisar o que já foi estudado sobre Turismo Militar e em que parâmetros podemos identificar o seu crescimento. Através de uma análise bibliométrica e com a ajuda do PRISMA framework, 78 artigos foram investigados, onde os respetivos dados foram organizados com a ajuda do ADO framework e do TCM framework. Adicionalmente, ao encontrar estudos que mencionavam a existência de controvérsias em museus militares na revisão de literatura, 500 comentários de 35 museus europeus foram retirados do *TripAdvisor*. Com a ajuda do *Leximancer* foi possível perceber a opinião dos visitantes em relação a esses museus, e se quando os visitam é algo que têm em consideração. Foi também feita uma análise SWOT para os respetivos museus, que consequentemente irá auxiliar diretores e funcionários a tomar as melhores decisões para atender às necessidades tanto dos visitantes como às dos museus militares.

Palavras-chave: Turismo Militar, Turismo de Guerra, Turismo Patrimonial, Turismo Macabro, Museus Militares.

JEL Classification:

L83 - Sports; Gambling; Recreation; Tourism.

Z31 - Tourism: Industry Studies.

Abstract

In recent years, there has been a growing interest in military history and heritage among travellers around the world, leading to a rise in the popularity of Military Tourism. In the academic world specifically, this niche type of tourism has been a point of interest for many researchers. One of the purposes of this dissertation is to analyse what has been studied about Military Tourism and in what ways we can identify its growth. Through a bibliometric analysis and the help of the PRISMA framework, 78 articles were investigated, and the data was organized with the use of the ADO and TCM frameworks. Additionally, as we found studies that stated the controversy of military museums in the literature review, 500 reviews of 35 European museums were taken from *TripAdvisor*, and with the help of *Leximancer* we were able to understand people's opinion on military museums, and if when visiting one they pay any attention to this controversy. With these comments it was possible to create a SWOT analysis for military museums that will help directors make the best decisions to cater both the visitors' and the museums' needs.

Keywords: Military Tourism, Battlefield Tourism, War Tourism, Dark Military Tourism, Military Museums.

JEL Classification:

L83 - Sports; Gambling; Recreation; Tourism.

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INDEX OF ACRONYMS

ADO – Antecedents, Decisions and Outcomes.

CATPAC – Computer Aided Techniques for Process Analysis and Control.

ICT – Information and Communications Technology.

PRISMA – Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis.

RQ – Research Question.

SWOT – Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, Threats.

TCM – Theories, Contexts and Methods.

UNESCO - United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization.

Introduction

The increasing importance of the tourism and travel industry seen in the past decades has led to a global rise in academic research in several different types of tourism (Dunkley *et al.*, 2011). One of the most recent interests in the industry has focused on historical past events and heritage, which is present in the base of the upcoming trend that is Military Tourism. This niche area within the industry has received increasing attention from academic researchers and practitioners from all corners of the world. Believed to have started after the historical *Battle of Waterloo* (1815), this specialized form of tourism attracts tourists that look for unique experiences and want to gain insights into the culture, history and the impacts of warfare. According to Zienkiewicz *et al.* (2021), it focuses essentially on visiting places and areas related to military conflict, including battlefields, bunkers, fortifications and military museums, and also participating in military tours, war re-enactments and military themed shows.

In light of this growing interest, it is important to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis to identify emerging trends in the field, and also provide valuable insights of the current state of knowledge in Military Tourism. Therefore, one of the main goals of the present study is to analyse what has been published so far and how this type of tourism has been presented in the academic world. It is aimed to identify the most influential authors and countries where these articles were published, the main academic journals and the articles with the most citations. Through the systematic collection and analysis of relevant publications that include articles and reports, this study will provide a complete overview of the research landscape. With the help of the PRISMA analysis framework it was ensured the inclusion of relevant studies from the *Scopus* database, as through each step articles or reports that were not eligible for this dissertation were eliminated for specific reasons. The PRISMA analysis framework let us with a final number of 78 articles to analyse.

For a better understanding of the existent body of academic literature in Military Tourism, this study proceeded to use two frameworks to systematically evaluate and synthesize the research in this type of tourism. Firstly introduced by Paul and Benito (2018), the ADO (Antecedents, Decisions and Outcomes) framework was applied in this study to shed a light on the antecedents that influence tourists to visit Military Tourism sites, the decision-making process and reasons to engage with these sites, and the overall outcomes of these experiences. In hand comes the TCM (Theories, Contexts and Methods) framework that provides a synthesis of the theories and models utilized, contextual factors and the methodological approaches within the Military Tourism studies that are being analysed.

As we reach our conclusions by having a deeper understanding on the previous body of literature regarding Military Tourism, it will be possible to answer the first four research questions of this dissertation:

1. *How have the articles related to Military Tourism been evolving over the years, countries and trends?*
2. *How has the investigation on Military Tourism been evolving in terms of number of publications and number of citations?*
3. *How has the theme Military Tourism evolved in literature using its theories, contexts and methods?*
4. *How has the theme Military Tourism evolved in literature through its antecedents, decisions and outcomes?*

As we gained a deeper understanding on what is Military Tourism based on previous academic research, we came across some intriguing subjects that sparked some curiosity and held significant relevancy to this study. Among these topics, military museums emerged as a captivating theme. However, as we delved deeper into the topic, it was found that military museums can sometimes be a subject of controversy, which encouraged us to investigate whether Military Tourism visitors show any interest on the controversial aspects when going to these touristic spaces. This led us to develop an additional research question to our study:

5. *How are military museums perceived by the public?*

To answer this last question, an additional method will be used. With the use of the *Leximancer* software, a concept map was created based on reviews published on the website *TripAdvisor* from thirty-five military museums in Europe. These reviews were all in English and from each museum 500 reviews were collected, making it a total of 17500 reviews to be analysed. The concept map counts with three different themes, those being: “museum”, where we were able to identify what visitors think about the exhibitions and the overall structure of the museum itself; “tour” includes concepts related to the military guided tours that most of these museums have as part of the experience and are often considered to be the main focus; and “staff”, where topics such as the overall staff behaviour, ticket prices and accessibility to the museums are covered. Based on these reviews, the study was able to make some important conclusions.

With this said, the structure of this dissertation goes as follows. In a first section, there will be a broad overview of already existent literature about Military Tourism and military museums. While there is a significant number of articles that mention Military Tourism, even

as “battlefield tourism” or “warfare tourism”, there is still some confusion over its main definition and how it differs from other types of tourism. For being very similar, tourism to military sites and museums is often confused with *dark tourism* and *heritage tourism*, as all three are often motivated by a desire in learning more about historical events. Therefore, the concepts of *dark tourism* and *heritage tourism* will also be explained in the following literature review section. Along with these, it will also be clarified how each of the research questions mentioned above will be answered.

Secondly, the appropriate type of methodology for this study will be explained in detail, accompanied with either tables or figures. This section elaborates the topics related to the bibliometric analysis of previous academic material, the PRISMA framework, and how the data analysis of the military museums was prepared. The results are then presented and subdivided in organized subgroups. Following through, the discussion and final conclusions will make it easier to understand the importance of this study.

Having said this, this research will contribute to the growing body of knowledge regarding Military Tourism, where future researchers can easily identify the existent gaps in the academic sphere to later on develop it. This study will also allow military museum directors to understand visitors’ behaviours and opinions regarding these institutions, which can help them make the best decisions that will benefit both the museums and the tourists.

CHAPTER 1: Literature Review

1.1 Military Tourism

Military Tourism is a fairly new and unusual form of tourism, that has also been referred to as war tourism (Harp, 2019), battlefield tourism (Dunkley *et al.*, 2011) or even warfare tourism (Dunkley *et al.*, 2007). Although there is still yet to exist an official definition of this concept, a possible definition for this niche type of tourism was found, describing it as “a typical recreational and tourist program of visual, cultural and material consumption” that involves visiting historical sites that are related to military conflict, including historic battlefields, military factories, military museums and those with large collections of military artefacts, fortifications and areas that are connected with famous military leaders (Zienkiewicz *et al.*, 2021).

Additionally, tourists that participate in this type of tourism attend military-themed shows and events, such as military fan conventions, military picnics, and re-enactments of historical moments or battles (Zienkiewicz *et al.*, 2021). Lawin and Stasiak (2009) also identified war graves, military cemeteries, battle memorials and defensive structures, such as strongholds, bunkers and citadels, as places visited by tourists that participate in this new type of tourism.

Military Tourism can attract a vast range of visitors with different levels of interest, motivations and needs. Visiting military sites is usually related to tourists' particular interest in war history, military engineering and technology, battlefield archaeology, or practicing/watching historical re-enactments (Zienkiewicz *et al.*, 2021). However, visitors to a battlefield might have other motivations, not necessarily directly connected with the battle's history or its military matters, such as looking for experiences between cultural education or pure entertainment and the overall desire for learning (Baldwin & Sharpley, 2009). It can also be connected with tourists' interests in war/military-related literature, movies, novels, television documentaries, reportage and games that not only provide information to tourists, but also cause a relatively strong emotional response among spectators (Chylińska, 2006). According to George and Das (2017) many visitors to these previously mentioned sites admit that their knowledge of military history comes equally from literature and art, television, and school teaching (George & Das, 2017).

In accordance with Kowalczyk's study (2009), there are a variety of touristic needs, those being: cognitive-recreational (hobbies); adventure (adventure tourism, extreme tourism etc.); cognition (interests); political-ideological (patriotism) and sentiment (memories, visiting the

graves of relatives). Later on, Magee and Gilmore (2015) identified three categories of tourists who travel to military sites, those being:

- Travellers for whom military heritage sites have emotional and personal significance and carry a feeling of being connected to their own heritage;
- Conventional tourists who do not seem to have personal links to military sites and view them simply as a leisure activity. These types of tourists mainly seek knowledge and education;
- Uncertain tourists who visit military heritage sites to “see it to believe it”.

Although the attraction of tourists to battlefields and military sites started taking place after the infamous *Battle of Waterloo* (1815), Zawadzki (2002) explains that the first studies on Military Tourism were only undertaken in the beginning of the 21st century, being defined as a subset of heritage tourism and referred to as “military heritage tourism” instead. It was stated as enabling individuals to “experience feelings of appreciation, awe, nostalgia and emotional attachment through contact with past events, culture and shared history” (Zawadzki, 2002). As wars to a great extent have shaped the history of mankind, influenced the development of art and culture and contributed to the progress of civilization, Bończak (2013) reasons why Military Tourism might as well be considered as a type of heritage tourism. Venter (2017) also categorized Military Tourism as a subset of heritage tourism that falls under the umbrella of the extensive concept that is mass tourism. Adding to this, Military Tourism is also part of a more sinister form of the industry called dark tourism, that apart from battlefields, it includes “visitation to sites, attractions and exhibitions which have real or recreated death, suffering or the seemingly macabre as a main theme” (Stone, 2005).

1.2 Heritage Tourism

Heritage tourism is “a subgroup of tourism, in which the main motivation for visiting a site is based on the place’s heritage characteristics according to the tourist’s perceptions of their own heritage” (Poria *et al.*, 2001). In the same year, Halewood and Hannam (2001) stated that heritage tourism involves a large range of themes that include aspects of the past, mainly landscapes and museums. Later on, Timothy (2011) explained that heritage tourism is a growing segment of the global tourism industry, with travellers increasingly seeking out destinations that offer authentic cultural and historical experiences. This form of tourism can have significant economic benefits for host communities, as visitors spend money on lodging, food, and souvenirs (Hall, 2010). However, there are certain concerns about the environmental

and social impacts of heritage tourism, and the need to balance economic development with the preservation of cultural heritage sites (Hall, 2010).

Within the developing world, heritage tourism experiences can take many forms, from visits to museums and historic sites, to cultural festivals and events (Munar & Ooi, 2019). Adding to this, heritage tourism is also present in existing cultures and folkways, in music, dance, language, religion, monuments, homes, farms, cathedrals, castles and archaeological ruins (Timothy & Nyaupane, 2009). Any conflicts and the battlefields on which they occurred are also considered to part of heritage tourism. These experiences are often highly subjective, as visitors interpret and make sense of the heritage they encounter in a variety of ways (Munar & Ooi, 2019).

According to Park *et al.* (2019), one of the most important attributes in heritage tourism is authenticity. This authenticity should be present and observed in “destinations, sites, events, cultures and experiences” and it overall improves the quality of this type of tourism (Park *et al.*, 2019). As the tourism industry continues to grow, it is important to ensure that heritage sites are protected and managed in a way that benefits both host communities and visitors.

1.3 Dark Tourism

Referred to as the “dark side” of tourism (Tarlow, 2005) and a concept that has been experiencing an increase popularity worldwide (Sharpley & Stone, 2009), dark tourism was first introduced as “thanatourism” in 1996. Seaton (1996) defined it as traveling to see enactments, sites of mass or individual deaths, as well as memorials, internment sites and material evidence of symbolic representations of death. Only in the twenty first century was introduced the term “dark tourism”, with the authors Lennon and Foley (2000) describing it as “the phenomenon which encompasses the presentation and consumption (by visitors) of real and commodified death and disaster sites”. Stone (2006) reinforces this idea by defining dark tourism as visiting attractions or sites where atrocities, death and disasters have happened, as well as “visiting sites or attractions that predate living memory” (Wight, 2006). It has also been known as fatal attraction, heritage that hurts (Uzzell & Ballantyne, 1998) or atrocity heritage tourism (Moeller, 2005).

Although the qualifier of dark is often mistakenly associated with a morbid fascination for death (Edensor, 2013), the dark part in dark tourism refers to the psychological way tourists and travellers are positioning themselves in a self-reflection about the place of death in the overall society and their contemplation of mortality (Martini & Buda, 2020).

According to Miles (2014), the most visited sites and areas included when participating in dark tourism are battlefields, murder and massacre sites, places where celebrities or important people have died, graveyards and internment sites, events, memorials, exhibitions featuring relics and, lastly, reconstruction of death. These dark tourism sites are able to not only conserve but also to capture the history and memories of humanity and offer them to the wider public through international and domestic tourism (Powell & Kennell, 2015).

Historically, dark tourism can be considered an old concept in a new world (Stone, 2005). Tourists have been drawn to places related to “dark places” such as battlefields or places of execution since the earliest times (Powel & Stefaniak, 2015). One of the earliest forms of dark tourism that has been identified are pilgrimages, as they are “often associated in one form or another, with religious pilgrims visiting the site of the death, or the graves of individuals or groups” (Liyanage *et al.*, 2015). Seaton (1996) has also stated that dark tourism dates back to the Middle Ages at least, while Dale and Robinson (2011) identified its practice as early as the Eleventh Century.

There are several reasons as to why someone would want to visit places of death and destruction, including: special interest (a personal interest a tourist may have in a particular sit, as a result of personal links or family associations to the event); thrill (being part of an re-enactment of the battle); authenticity (representation of the event from all perspectives); morbid curiosity (people interested in the macabre); self-discovery (knowing what the ancestors experienced); iconic sites (some sites are considered a ‘must-see’ for tourists); contemplation (thinking history through for personal reflection); economic resurgence (creation of employment and profit through visitation); heritage discovery (discovering a sense of identity through past histories); and acts of remembrance (honouring those who sacrificed their lives) (Kim & Butler, 2014).

After analysing the three main concepts – military tourism, heritage tourism, dark tourism – we can observe enough similarities between the three to relate them with each other. Despite their differences, these three concepts share some common themes and characteristics. For example, all three involve the exploration and interpretation of the past and are often motivated by a desire in learning more about historical events and their impact on society (Stone, 2012). In addition, each of these forms of tourism has the potential to generate economic benefits for host communities, through the development of museums, monuments, and other attractions that appeal to visitors (Hall, 2010).

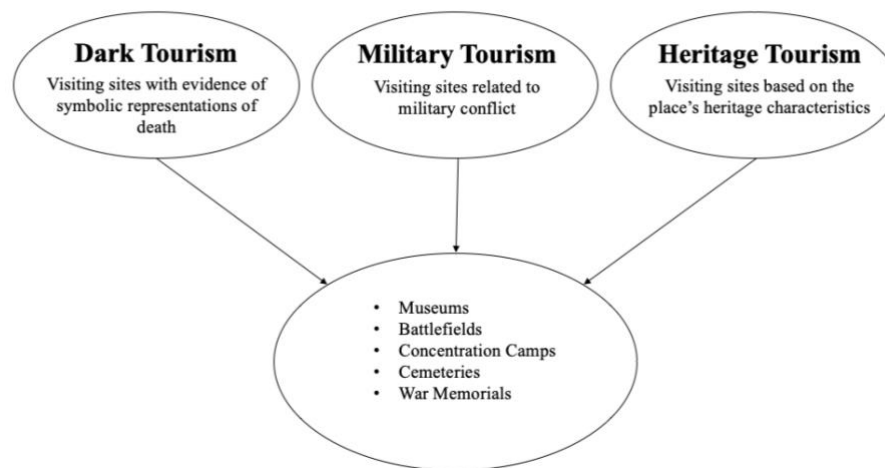


Figure 1 - Similarities between Dark, Military and Heritage Tourism.

Moreover, there are often significant overlaps between Military Tourism and both heritage and dark tourism. For instance, many military sites are also considered heritage sites due to their cultural and historical significance, such as battlefields, forts, and military cemeteries. Similarly, some military sites are also associated with dark tourism, such as concentration camps and war memorials that commemorate mass atrocities.

Overall, while Military Tourism, heritage tourism, and dark tourism are distinct concepts, they are also closely interlocked, as it is described in *Figure 1*. Understanding these connections can help us to better appreciate the ways in which tourism can be used to explore, commemorate, and learn from the past, while also highlighting the so often elaborate ethical and social issues that are present in these forms of tourism.

As we are able to understand the different concepts and have a more concrete idea to what military tourism entitles, it is now possible to identify the research questions to be answered in this study. The first four research questions go as follows:

- RQ1: *How have the articles related to Military Tourism been evolving over the years, countries and trends?*

The first research question helps us understand in what countries the theme is more researched about and how the research has been trending and growing all over the world throughout the years.

- RQ2: *How has the investigation on Military Tourism been evolving in terms of number of publications and number of citations?*

This second research question will let us comprehend how Military Tourism has been evolving in number of publications and citations, by analysing the articles, journals and understanding the most influential and important authors that gave us the access to past of this theme.

- RQ3: *How has the theme Military Tourism evolve in literature using its theories, contexts and methods?*

The third research question brings up the past and the present of the research on Military Tourism, especially what has already been investigated, theories, methods, and the conclusions that have been made by researchers throughout the years. To gather all this data, systemize and show the evidence on this topic, the TCM framework was used and presented in detail.

- RQ4: *How has the theme Military Tourism evolve in literature through its antecedents, decisions and outcomes?*

The fourth research question helps us understand what has been said in the past literature about Military Tourism, what makes people choose this type of tourism and the outcomes that it has. To organize this data and for a better understanding, the ADO framework was used.

1.4 Military Museums

There is a vast range of attractions and sites that tourists can visit when engaging with military tourism, which include battlefields, monuments, concentration camps and museums (Graham & Lennon, 2002). These museums are dedicated to the military exhibit important historical artefacts, are a crucial part of military history, and apart from that, serve as “fundamental sub-elements in the tourism system” (Venter, 2016). Overall, they focus on military history and its exhibitions or collections include weapons, equipment, tactics, and personnel involved in past conflicts. Military museums may be dedicated to a specific military branch, unit, or conflict, that can be found in any part of the world (Szitanyi, 2015). It is also displayed material that is culturally associated with armies that have played central roles in society, such as uniforms, medals and trophies, weapons and flags (Scott, 2015).

Throughout the years, the military history portrayed in these museums have focused on emphasizing the “common soldier the experience of war, and the place of the armed forces in society” (Hacker & Vining, 2013). These museums often feature exhibits that showcase military technology and equipment, as well as personal stories and artefacts that help visitors connect with the human side of military history (Scott, 2015).

In an overall perspective, museums have always served as a mean of education to learn about the past (Venter, 2014), and these military themed ones are becoming a “worthy norm of education” worldwide. Scott (2015) reinforces this idea by explaining how “for many people, a visit to a military history museum is one of the main ways that they will learn about war”. According to Marcus *et al.* (2017), these museums may offer educational programs for school groups and other visitors, as well as special events and activities that engage visitors with military history in a hands-on way. However, for this to happen, museums should be reliable sources of information and provide real connection of the past times (Scott, 2015). Moreover, they are also of great importance as they are aimed to preserve the military heritage of a certain nation or country, consequently honouring the women and men who served and risked their lives for a greater cause (Venter, 2017).

However, military museums might be controversial and “bringing war to life” can be dangerous (Winter, 2012). There is a big and undeniable gap between the real past and the reconstructed past, and what happens often is the lack of balance between the aesthetic and the historically accurate representations. According to Winter (2012), it is important for these museums to also display the less enjoyable sides of history “even if this disturbs the romantic and nostalgic images some people love to cultivate”.

In military museums, war may be represented as a positive or/and negative phenomenon that can evoke feelings of pride or guilt (Scott, 2015). According to Venter (2014), visitors also feel a sort of thrill when viewing evidence from the past, of military machines that leads to them imagining “great battles fought long ago”. While in the beginning of the military museum history the core visitors were often white males with a military background, things started to change between the 60’s and the 2000’s (Raths, 2013). It was during this time frame that the mandatory military service was abolished by many countries in Europe, which led to military museums having to change their tactics to cater this audience of civilian visitors. Although not every museum went in the same direction, many opted to add new exhibits and modernize old collections, while at the same time maintain the exhibitions that were popular amongst the traditionalists (Raths, 2013). This is believed to be the best approach to satisfy both the new visitors, as well as the older ones.

With the knowledge acquired through previous literature on military museums, it is now possible to identify a last research question that will give this study a more complete approach on the theme of military tourism:

- RQ5: *How have military museums been perceived by the public?*

This last question relates to the opinions of visitors to military museums in Europe and helps us understand what their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats are. For this part, the reviews will be taken from the website *TripAdvisor* and organized in a map of concepts with the help of *Leximancer*. A SWOT analysis will then be made, using the concepts gathered in the already mentioned *Leximancer* map, where it will be possible to see which concepts are related to the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of the chosen military museums.

CHAPTER 2: Methodology

This section of the study is dedicated to understanding what the chosen methodologies are, and why they were selected for this study. In this segment, it is explained what a bibliometric analysis is, how the PRISMA framework works, how the military museums comments were analysed, and lastly, why is the *Leximancer* concept map being used in this study.

2.1 Bibliometric Analysis of Previous Academic Literature

The bibliometric analysis is a term that was first defined by Pritchard (1969) who explained that this process can be applied in all studies that aim to quantify the process of written information (Gokhale *et al.*, 2020). It helps identifying the publications by authors, years, the most prominent and relevant journals, the countries of publications and the conclusions obtained (Durán Sánchez *et al.*, 2014). This rigorous method that explores and analyses a big amount of scientific data has been gaining immense popularity, especially due to the accessibility of several bibliometric software such as *VOSviewer* and *Leximancer*, and databases like *Scopus* and *Web of Science*. As it identifies all those aspects about written information, the use of a bibliometric analysis can help an author to identify emerging trends in journal and article performance, while helping to identify the existent gaps that will be covered in later studies.

2.2 PRISMA (Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis)

This study adopted a systematic approach to review literature, which lead us to examine research articles and take note of their outcomes and form necessary conclusions. Published in 2009 for the first time, the Preferred Reporting Items for Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analysis (PRISMA) methodology provided systematic reviewers with a reporting guidance (Liberati *et al.*, 2009). This protocol is built with four main steps: identification, filtering, eligibility and inclusion (Ter Huunre *et al.*, 2017). In this study, we combined both the filtering and eligibility steps for a better visual understanding, naming it *screening* as it will be seen in below.

The very first step of the PRISMA is to identify all relevant items and the chosen database for the goal. *Scopus* was the chosen and preferred database to build the bibliographic base. *Scopus* is defined as being the largest citation and abstract database of peer-reviewed literature, which include books, scientific journals and conference proceedings as well (ELSEVIER, 2023). Additionally, it possesses an incredible and high-quality filtering criterion that

contributes to a more reliable result and sample (Rinaldi *et al.*, 2018). With choosing one of the best search platforms, comes the collection of trustworthy and comprehensive information and publications. To conduct the search, a series of keywords that are both explicitly and implicitly related to Military Tourism were wisely defined, providing the study with the most accurate understanding of the topic. The very first sample collected from the *Scopus* database included 156 articles, but only the keywords “military tourism”, “heritage tourism” and “war tourism” were used. Later on, to those keywords were added “armament tourism”, “dark tourism” and “battlefield tourism”. The search originated in a total of 497 elements. It is important to mention that the search considered all works published until June of 2023 (included).

The second step of the PRISMA protocol consists in the process of a trial. During this phase, it is essential to isolate the most important and main items. As the goal is to examine peer-reviewed articles, a total of 155 (one hundred and fifty-five) articles were excluded for being conference papers, book chapters, etc., only for documents that are identified as being “articles” and “reviews” to be included. Adding to this filtering, 30 articles were removed as they were not written in the English language. Lastly, there was 1 article that was not given any access opportunity, and therefore, could not be analysed. With this, the study ended up being left with 311 articles after this step. This resulted in a final outcome of: TITLE-ABS-KEY (("war" OR "military" OR "battlefield" OR "armament") AND "dark tourism") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY (("war" OR "military" OR "battlefield" OR "armament") AND "heritage tourism") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("military tourism") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("war tourism") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("battlefield tourism") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("armament tourism") OR TITLE-ABS-KEY ("military heritage") AND (LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "ar") OR LIMIT-TO (DOCTYPE , "re")) AND (LIMIT-TO (LANGUAGE , "English")).

In PRISMA’s third and last step, an eligibility evaluation is made and the criteria to include or not certain articles is explained in detail. To identify the documents that go according to the purpose of this study, the abstract from each item was read in order to understand if there were articles that did not meet the established requirements. If the abstract of a certain article was not straightforward on what the study is about, the article was read for a better understanding. In this case, studies whose main focus was tourism post war, that were not related to tourism at all or were related to other types of tourism were eliminated in this phase. Once this procedure was done, the final sample counted with 78 eligible articles.

Figure 2 below outlines the PRISMA flow chart of this study, showing us the course of the articles that were excluded and included, by following the process of identification, screening and inclusion, that has been previously described in detail.

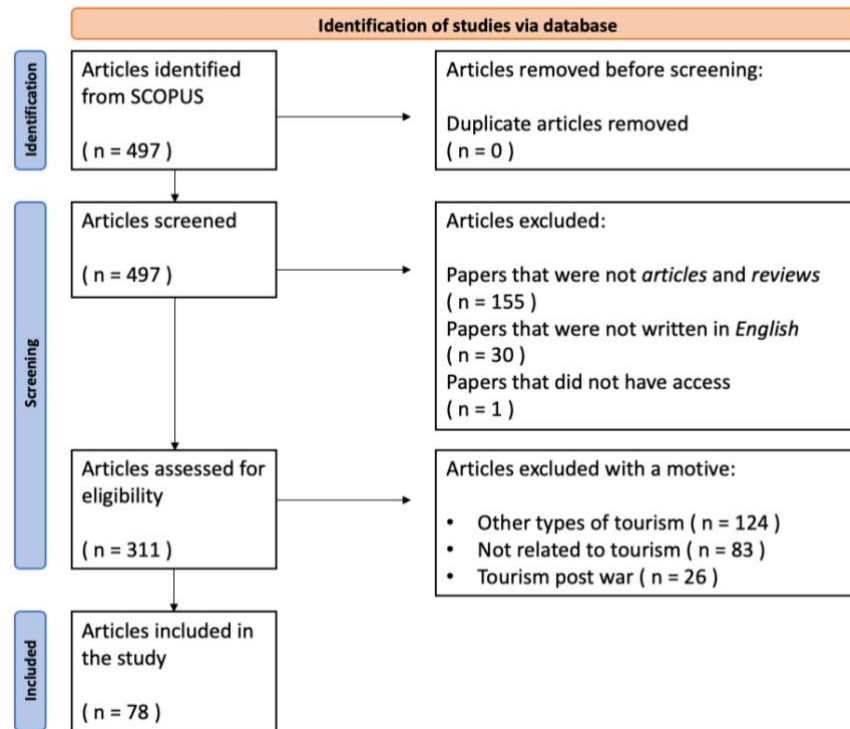


Figure 2 - PRISMA analysis of Military Tourism studies.

2.3 Data Analysis of Military Museums Comments

To gain an understanding of the personal experiences and reflections made by visitors to military museums, a qualitative research was made. Specifically, comments posted by tourists and locals that have visited military museums in Europe, with most of them being situated in England and France. 35 military museums were included, with 500 reviews per museum being extracted from *TripAdvisor*. This top-rated online platform founded in 2000 initiated travel-based word-of-mouth by allowing travellers and visitors to share their opinion regarding their experiences in the travel and lodging sector (Chittiprolu *et al.*, 2021). It is now considered the main online travel guide and certainly a game changer in the hospitality industry (Saydam *et al.*, 2022). According to Liu *et al.* (2017), collecting research data form *TripAdvisor* enables us to gather a large amount of reliable personal reviews that form a big group of data, allowing the study to achieve high external validity. To make sure the reviews are in fact reliable, *TripAdvisor* examines the online review writer's email address and internet protocol, while

also looking for inappropriate language before someone is able to share their post on the platform.

The data obtained included reviews posted from the date of the first review to the day of this data collection. For each comment, details such as the title of the review, the author and the total profile reviews were selected. The overall satisfaction rating according to the travel platform *TripAdvisor* that ranges from 1 star to 5 was also included in the extraction of each comment.

The sample counts with a total of 17500 reviews, with both positive and negative aspects about the 35 European military museums. Europe offers a diverse range of important military museums, such as the *Lascaris War Rooms* in Malta, the *Musée de l'Armée des Invalides* in France, and the *Imperial War Museum* in England. With these reviews, we are able to understand visitors' opinions on their overall experience.

The data collected from *TripAdvisor* was qualitatively analysed by the *Leximancer* software. *Leximancer* is a text analytics tool used to analyse data semantically in an electronic format, identify concepts and themes, and interconnect with contributions between each other (Leximancer, 2023). Unlike other content analysis software, such as *CATPAC* and *Atlas*, *Leximancer* “uses its own algorithm based on lexical co-occurrence to conduct the content analysis” as the researcher bias is also reduced, the results are more reliable than others (Sanz-Blas *et al.*, 2019). *Leximancer* produces a visual colourful concept map where the main concepts are presented in clusters according to the relationships between each of them. The relative importance of each theme is indicated by their size, so the bigger the circle the more important is the identified theme (Sanz-Blas *et al.*, 2019). According to Hepworth and Paxton (2017), the concepts that are mentioned together usually settle near each other in the map as they attract one another strongly.

Leximancer has many times been used to analyze reviews of museums and other forms of tourism as it has been gaining popularity in the tourism and hospitality fields (Goh & Wilk, 2022). In a study made by Olorunsola *et al.* (2023), *Leximancer* was used to help finding the main themes shared online through reviews made by tourists who visited Petra UNESCO heritage site. Previously, in 2020, *Leximancer* had been used in Chen and Ryan' study (2020) to understand the visitors' satisfaction regarding *Shaanxi History Museum* in Xi'an, China.

The software automatically defines a complete list of words that were mentioned in the reviews, not all of them provide a meaningful information, and therefore it is necessary to review everything very carefully (Sanz-Blas *et al.*, 2019). In some cases, concepts should not be deleted from the automatic list made by *Leximancer*, even if they appear in plural/singular

form or have the same meaning. The reason is that, although they seem to be repeated, when reading the word in the context of the phrases, the meaning might be different.

CHAPTER 3: Results

3.1 Descriptive Statistics

This section of the thesis describes the sample publication trends over the years, the regions where they have been published, how many journals are included, the most cited articles and most influential authors.

3.1.1 Publication trends over the years

The earliest article related to Military Tourism was published in 1996, which shows us that this topic is a young research field. However, research was very limited until 2011 and around 50% of the articles were published from 2018 through 2022. Publications then reached its peak in 2020, with 11 out of the 78 eligible works getting published. This rise in publications might justify the recent public interest on military tourism and museums.

3.1.2 Articles by journal

In order to identify the main journals where articles about Military Tourism have been published, and therefore, are considered to be the most influential ones for this study, it was counted the number of articles per journal. Out of the 78 eligible papers, 72 of these were published in journals all over the world. There are 46 journals in total publishing about military tourism, and as we can see below in Table 1, the *Journal of Heritage Tourism* has published the highest number of articles (9). It is followed by the *Annals of Future Research* (5) and the *Tourism Geographies* (4). All journals left have published at least one paper each. However, and although the *Journal of Heritage Tourism* has more articles published, the *Annals of Tourism Research* counts with almost 100 citations more than the first one (375).

Table 1 - Military Tourism articles by journal.

Ranking	Journals	Nº of Articles	Nº of Citations
1	Journal of Heritage Tourism	9	277
2	Annals of Tourism Research	5	375
3	Tourism Geographies	4	125

3.1.3 Articles published by region

It was also examined where Military Tourism research is being conducted over the years, considering the number of articles based on the authors' geographical region. Most articles were published by researchers based in North America, Europe and Pacific (Oceania). The United States of America, United Kingdom, Australia and Poland count with the highest number of published works.

3.1.4 Citation analysis – Most cited articles

A citation analysis helps us understand the influence of a certain article by counting the amount of citations. In this dissertation, we considered the citations found in the *Scopus* database, and were able to identify the *top five* most cited articles. The article with the highest number of citations, *Visiting the trenches: Exploring meanings and motivations in battlefield tourism* (Dunkley *et al.*, 2011) counted with 183, following by articles with 165, 160, 155 and 71 citations each. In Table 2 below, we can see this data in detail.

Table 2 - Military Tourism most cited articles.

Ranking	Year	Authors	Title	Journal	Nº of Citations
1	2011	Dunkley R., Morgan N., Westwood S.	<i>Visiting the trenches: Exploring meanings and motivations in battlefield tourism</i>	Tourism Management	183
2	1998	Smith V.L.	<i>War and tourism: An American ethnography</i>	Annals of Tourism Research	165
3	2014	Hartmann R.	<i>Dark tourism, thanatourism, and dissonance in heritage tourism management: New directions in contemporary tourism research</i>	Journal of Heritage Tourism	160
4	1996	Crang M.	<i>Magic kingdom or a quixotic quest for authenticity?</i>	Annals of Tourism Research	155
5	2014	Miles S.	<i>Battlefield sites as dark tourism attractions: An analysis of experience</i>	Journal of Heritage Tourism	71

Out of the 80 eligible works, 37 were cited less than 10 times, which translates to around 46% of the works. When it comes to articles without any citation, 14 out of the 80 do not have any citation in the database, which counts as almost 18% out of all of them.

3.1.5 Citation analysis - Most influential author

Table 3 - Military Tourism most influential author

Ranking	Name	Nº of Articles	Nº of Citations
1	Hall J.	3	62
2	Lockstone-Binney L.	3	62
1	Hartmann R.	2	161
2	Miles S.	2	89
3	Lee C.-K.	2	73

Table 3 shows the three most influential authors for this study according to the data found on *Scopus*. In order to understand the most influential authors, it was considered the number of citations of each author on *Scopus* and the number of documents published. According to the table, the most influential authors based on the number of articles published are Hall J. and Lockstone-Binney L. and they both count with 3 articles published each. However, they only count with 62 citations each.

Yet, if we look at the most influential authors based on the number of citations that they have on Military Tourism articles, the author Hartmann R. counts with 161 citations and two articles posted, followed by Miles S. with 89 citations and Lee C.-K. with 73 citations in their published articles.

3.2 Structure Organization Methods

The structure of systematic review is of extreme importance and there are now several methods that enables organization in order to increase the impact and the relevance of the article (Paul & Criado, 2020). Recently, more and more researchers have been stating the importance of having an organizing framework that provides the study the support needed for the development of an enriched systematic review (Lim *et al.*, 2021). Essentially, studies that include one or more frameworks in its analysis are considered to be more complete as they offer a more robust structure. Some methods used by researchers include *7-P framework* developed by Callahan (2014), *ADO framework* first introduced by Paul and Benito (2018), *TCM framework* (Paul *et al.*, 2017) and *TCCM framework* (Theories, Context, Characteristics and Methodology), developed Paul and Rosado-Serrano (2019).

Although four methods were mentioned above, this dissertation adopts a framework approach that offers a more robust summary of Military Tourism, using the theories, contexts and methods (TCM) framework to clarify material from existing literature that could lead to

new insights on the topic. Previous existing material is also sought to be organized to gain insights over relationships through the antecedents, decisions and outcomes (ADO) framework (Paul & Benito, 2018). Both these frameworks are meant to help and create a clearer view of fragmented knowledge.

By combining the two frameworks mentioned, we are also letting them complement each other. Although the TCM is an excellent framework as it organizes the groundwork of past research and gives future research the necessary tools to make new discoveries, ADO adds the interesting content in a structured assembly (Paul & Benito, 2017; Paul *et al.*, 2017).

3.2.1 TCM Framework

The TCM framework was first developed by Paul *et al.* (2017), where each letter of the acronym stands for a part of the framework. “T” refers to theories, where the perspectives that scholars rely on to guide their investigation are meant to be encapsulated. “C” refers to contexts, which demonstrates the circumstances that entail when investigating a certain topic, and “M” refers to the methods or the empirical evidence used.

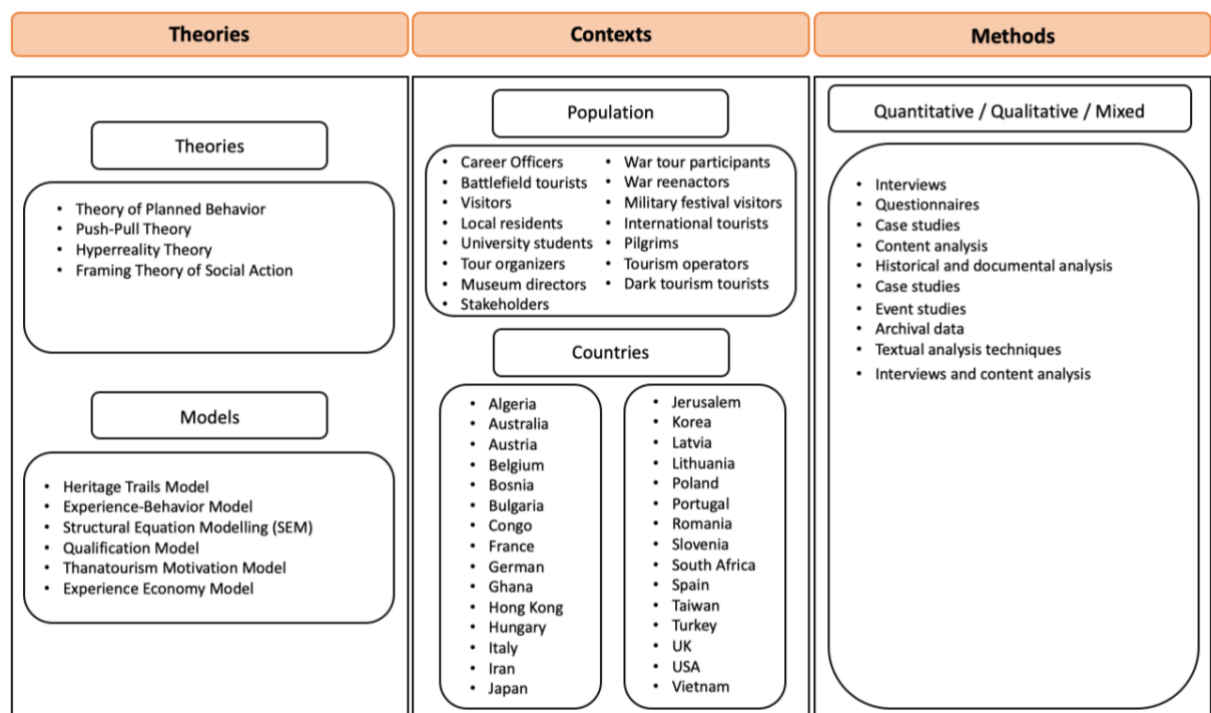


Figure 3 - TCM framework for Military Tourism studies.

I. Theories

As we can see in Figure 3 right above, the articles on Military Tourism used certain models and theories, many of them to help understand the behaviour and motivations of tourists that engage with this type of tourism. In total, 10 models and theories were used in the sample. One of the most interesting theories used is the *Theory of Planned Behaviour* used in *Understanding views on war in dark tourism: a mixed-method approach* (Juan Y. *et al.*, 2020). The authors used this theory to investigate the behavioural intention of tourists that participate in tourism sites associated with their views on war, as this theory “confirmed that personality and individual-centric variables might influence tourist behaviour” (Juan *et al.*, 2020).

An exciting new model for the tourism industry that was used in the articles in the sample is the *Heritage Trails Model*, firstly introduced and developed by Timothy and Boyd (2015) and adapted by Miles (2017). This model helped identify if heritage tourism routes were either organically or purposively planned, that meaning that the routes were either already there from war times or were specifically created for tourism purposes to remember these war heritage sites.

II. Contexts

In the articles and papers about Military Tourism that have been analysed for this study, the focus seemed to be concentrated the most in Poland (which is the example of Applboim & Poria, 2008, and Zienkiewicz *et al.*, 2022), as well as South Africa and Turkey. This can be explained by the amount of war sites existent in each destination and how incredibly impactful the events were for the world as we know today, like the *Battle of Gallipoli* in Turkey, and the *Second World War* between 1939 and 1945.

The focus of these studies seemed to lay the most on battlefield tourists, university students, that for example can be found in the article posted by Lemelin *et al.* (2016) about the potentials of battlefield tourism, and tourism operators. These groups were seen to be the main targets and the most interested in participating in Military Tourism related activities.

III. Methods

When it comes to the methodology used in the articles that were analysed, it can be seen through the TCM framework that several methods have been chosen.

Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods have all been used. When it comes to the quantitative methods, textual analysis techniques based on online reviews were used (see, for example, Bornarel *et al.*, 2021) On the other hand, the qualitative methods that have been most

used are interviews (which is the example of Brown & Ibarra, 2018) and case studies (see, for example, Chen & Tsai, 2019). In the mixed methodology, both the quantitative and qualitative methods are used (which is the case of Mirisae & Ahmad, 2018 and Thi Le & Pearce, 2011)

3.2.2 ADO Framework

This framework was established by Paul and Benito (2018) where it clarifies the reasons for engaging in a certain behaviour and the types of behavioural performance and, if the case, non-performance, as well as the evaluations that arise after. Therefore, the “A” stands for the antecedents, that are internal or external factors that influence a decision, the “D” refers to decisions made either individually or in group that may be influenced by the antecedents, and lastly, the “O” represents the outcomes or consequences of those decisions (Lim *et al.*, 2021). All three categories are related and influence each other (Paul & Benito, 2018).

In this case, the antecedents include the reasons as to why someone would engage in Military Tourism, the decision stands for the intention to go, learn and engage with this type of tourism, and the outcomes include both the positive and negative impacts that Military Tourism has on the people that engage with it, as well as the destinations and locations.

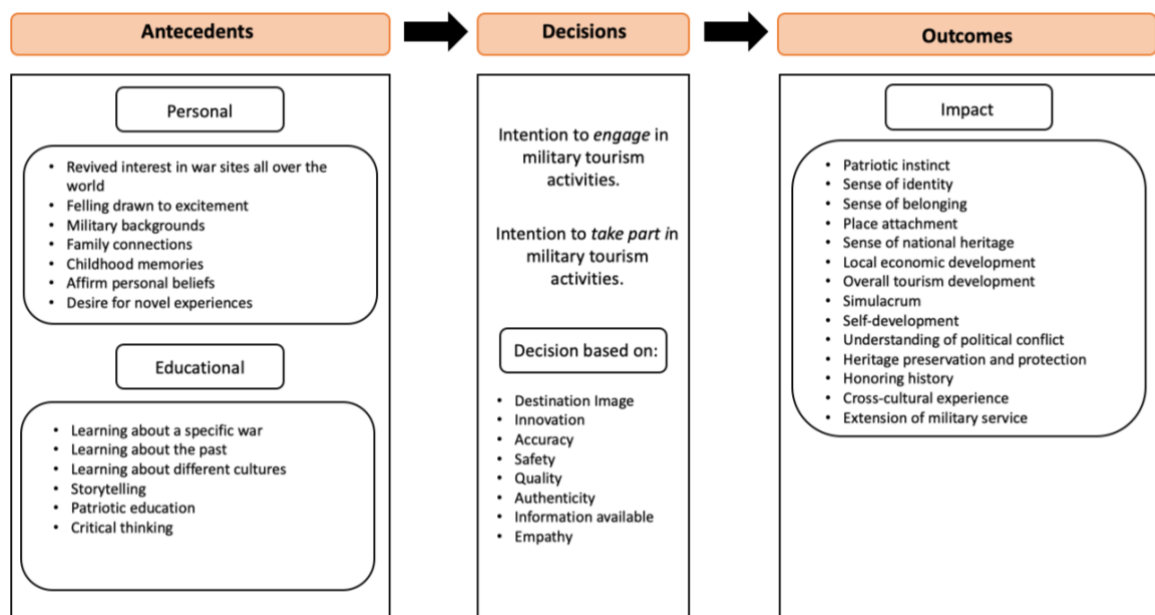


Figure 4 - ADO framework for Military Tourism studies.

I. Antecedents

Based on the articles that have been examined, there are many motivations and reasons as to why one would engage with Military Tourism. For a better organization in the framework seen in Figure 4, those reasons were divided in two categories: “personal” motivations that are related to individual motives; and “educational” motivations, where all reasons related to learning more about military history are listed. In a study that explored the motivations and meanings in battlefield tourism, a conclusion that was taken was that people would participate in this type of tourism due to family connections and childhood memories. Some visitors choose to go to war sites to commemorate, remember and express their love to those who have passed away during wars (Dunkley *et al.*, 2011). It is way to reconnect and a form of paying homage. Other visitors use their childhood memories as a justification to engage in Military Tourism. Some people see in war sites and battlefields a way to relive their childhood interest for soldiers and remember the times they used to reconstruct battles. This interest later on transforms into a pretext to learn about historic wars, which then leads to an interest in participating in Military Tourism (Dunkley *et al.*, 2011). In Çakar’s study (2020) about the motivations that tourists have to visit the battlefields in the Gallipoli Peninsula it was found that education and learning more about the past is an important motivational factor to visit “places where tragic and often violent incidents have taken place (Çakar, 2020).

II. Decisions

After understanding the antecedents that come before deciding, it is important to identify the criteria of what makes people chose to participate in a certain type of Military Tourism event.

The intention to engage or/and take part in these activities can many times be based on accuracy. In a study made on the tourism to *Lu Gou Qiao’ Museum of the War of Chinese People’s Resistance against Japanese Aggression* by Hartmann and Su (2021), it was concluded that the accuracy in the presentation of the historic events during the *Second Sino-Japanese War* in 1937 leaves the visitors highly motivated to learn about the past.

Another crucial factor is the use of technology. According to Alabau-Montoya and Ruiz-Molina’s study *Enhancing visitor experience with war heritage tourism through information and communication technologies: evidence from Spanish Civil War museums and sites* (2020), the use of technology, such as images, music, augmented reality and virtual reality, is thought to contribute to generate vivid experiences, as well as to develop a feeling of understanding of history and immersion in it. After analysing comments on *TripAdvisor* made by visitors to war

related exhibitions that implemented ICT solutions, it was seen that they considered it worthy, impressive and empathetic, and would likely recommend on electronic word-of-mouth communications (Alabau-Montoya & Ruiz-Molina, 2020). Overall, war related museums should use technology as an approach to step up and bring visitors in.

Related to this use of technology comes the amount of information available regarding a military tourism site or activity. In Hall *et al.*'s study (2011), it was revealed that information sources such as social media, knowledgeable travel agents, internet and word-of mouth (personal recommendation) from previous visitors influence the decision to visit the battlefield of Gallipoli.

III. Outcomes

In relation to the outcomes, there were certain very positive impacts identified in the articles. It is the example of a study made by Irimiás (2014) on the *Great War* heritage site management in Trentino, where it was concluded that preserving the heritage sites of the *Great War* offered the next generations the possibility to learn more about the past, as they do not have direct memories about these events. As more people engage with heritage sites related to the military, there is a higher need to preserve them for its history.

Another example is the economic development that Military Tourism can bring, especially to less developed regions. In a study made by Proos and Hattingh (2020) related to the development of the *South African War Battlefield Route* through the locations of various battles in the area, it was concluded that “the development of tourism and especially tourism routes can contribute to the economic development of local areas”. This economic benefit was also referred in Marschall's study (2008) about Zulu's heritage as touristic attractions.

3.3 Military Museums Comments

For this study, *Leximancer* identified a total of 103 concepts but it was necessary to remove some of them that were either too generic for the study (such as “lots”, “left” and “during”) or name-like concepts (such as “English”, “German” and “Malta”). Apart from that, it was also necessary to do a data cleaning procedure, that involved combining words with a similar linguistic meaning or that were presented both in plural and single form. Words such as “display/displays”, “museum/museums” and “visit/visiting/visited” were merged together. The final list of concepts included 80 words.

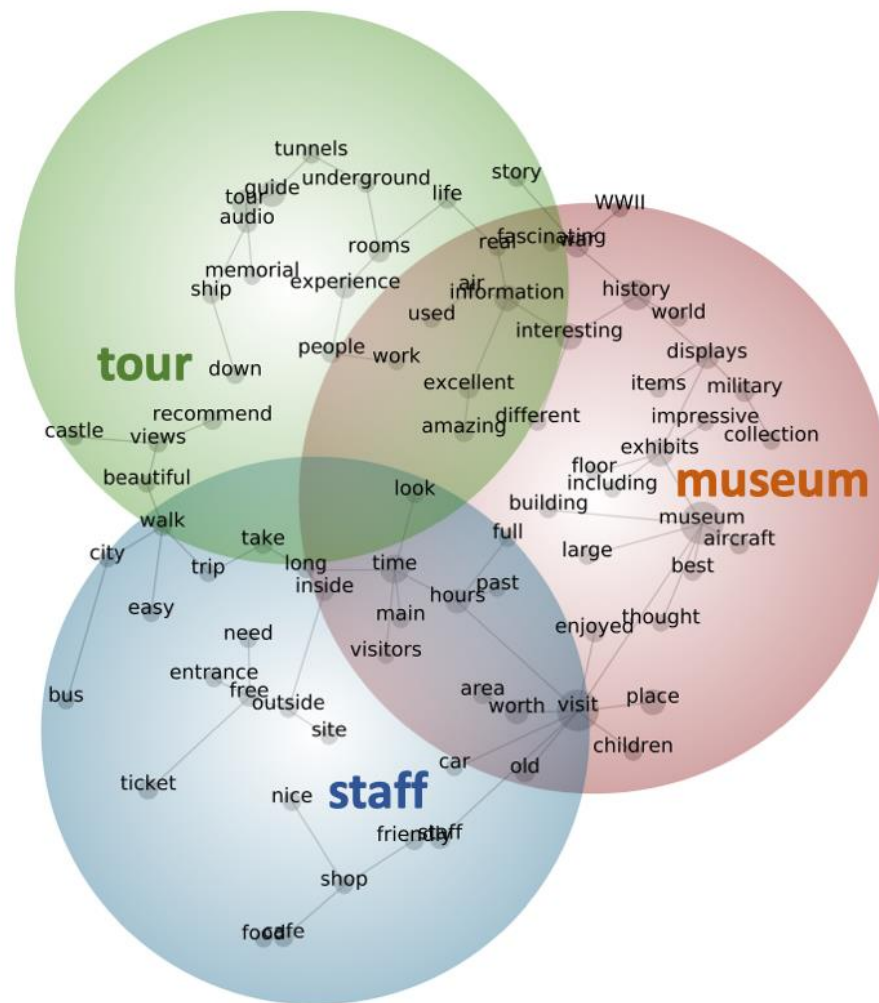


Figure 5 - Leximancer concept map for Military Museums comments.

When the visual map displayed as Figure 5 was created, the concepts visualization was set to 100% so all concepts were displayed, the theme size was set to 72% and the rotation left at 0%. The map showed us three main themes reflected in the reviews left by the visitors of military museums, those being “museum” (100%), “tour” (34%) and “staff” (19%).

In the *Leximancer* visual map seen above, the “museum” theme seemed to be the most important one, with concepts such as “visit”, “history”, “exhibits”, “information”, “war” and “displays” being included in the cluster. “Tour” comes right after as a theme, with words like “tunnels”, “memorial”, “recommend” and “guide” as part of the cluster. Lastly, the “staff” cluster counts with “nice”, “friendly”, “entrance” and “easy” as some of the concepts.

3.3.1 Representation of the overall opinion on the museums

The concepts inside this cluster refer to what has been talked about the most when mentioning the museums itself. Many comments referred to the “displays”, “collections” and “exhibits” about the European wars, explaining how the visitors felt about it and what they saw when they visited the place. The words “impressive”, “enjoyed” and “large” were frequently associated to those previous words when mentioning this topic. Some examples are:

“Unbelievable breadth and amount of exhibits. Not just aircraft but military vehicles and equipment of every description.”

“I am a history buff so I loved it. The exhibitions on the more recent history (world war 2) is somewhat disappointing but I really enjoyed it overall. Would recommend it”

“This large museum building is part of an interesting historical military base. Lots to see”

Still in the “museums” cluster, it was mentioned how and if military museums are adapted to all sorts of people, from the younger generations to the people that are not the biggest enthusiasts of military themed tourism. “Place” and “children” are two of the words linked to this topic:

“Simply amazing. This museum really is designed to engage the world’s youth with the history of the Warsaw uprising. It’s interactive and interesting.”

“This museum has the nice tagline about war belonging in museums. We had a group having both people interested in military history and those really not, but both enjoyed the visit for somewhat different reasons.”

3.3.2 Representation of the overall opinion on the tours

This cluster and its concepts are representing the visitors’ opinions on the tours that are part of most military museums. These tours are organized inside the museums and are often a preferred

way to go along the exhibitions. Other military tours are made underground through tunnels and caves that have been there since the times of the war that has occurred. Words such as “experience”, “underground” and “down” are often associated with this theme. Some of the comments are the following:

“After arriving at the well organised reception you're given a helmet and audio kit and taken down 20 metres in a lift shaft to start the tour of the limestone quarry and tunnels.”

“Very good guided tour and it really did bring home what life was like in the caves in the first world war.”

“The tour is suitable for all ages and it would be an excellent educational opportunity for younger members of the family.”

3.3.3 Representation of the overall opinion on the staff

In the “staff” theme are present concepts that describe or relate to the staff of European military museums, as well as the restauration and shopping area that most of them have. Most comments related to that topic include the words “friendly” and “nice” and some examples include:

“Really friendly staff, decent food available, kids play areas, but most importantly, tonnes and tonnes of tanks!”

“Very friendly staff with a wealth of knowledge and enthusiasm to share, set alongside some incredible machines and displays plus an excellent shop and facilities.”

Another topic covered in this cluster is related to the tickets to enter the military museums and how much they cost, if they are affordable or more expensive than what visitors are expecting when booking:

“Very much worth even the full entrance fee, but as older people we got in even more cheaply.”

“Quite expensive to spend the whole day there and ultimately if museums aren't your thing, you need only an hour or two here.”

Also featured in this cluster is the accessibility to the museums. Visitors commented on their opinion regarding the level of difficulty to reach the areas, as many times these museums are not situated in the main areas of the city. There were also comments on how expensive or not it was to reach the museums. “Long” and “outside” are some of the repeated words when visitors comment on this part. Some examples include:

“The palace is a fair distance outside of the city center and old town areas, there's a 40-minute trip by bus, but somehow it takes longer by car.”

“The palace is located in the outskirts of Warsaw, access is easy either by car or by public transport, but it takes long.”

3.4 SWOT Analysis

Based on the previous *Leximancer* map of the reviews left by visitors of the 35 chosen European military museums, we were also able to identify internal and external factors that affect this tourism and travel business both positively and negatively. This was possible through the use of a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis. Also known as a SWOT matrix, this analytical tool is used to diagnose external and internal factors of any product or service that is provided by an institution or firm (Misra & Milla, 2022). The information gathered through this technique can help create efficient and effective business strategies by detecting obstacles and letting firms and institutions design proposals for future improvements. (Martín-Cáceres & Cuenca-López, 2016). Apart from being easy to interpret, a SWOT analysis is also an inexpensive tool to use and it allows a quick and easy data analysis (Misra & Milla, 2022).

In this SWOT analysis, the internal factors are indicators of competence or incompetence that include the museums facilities, conditions, prices and complementary services and that are considered to be the strengths and the weaknesses of military museums. When it comes to the external factors, opportunities and threats such as mobility and the museums' surroundings are

included and identified in order for the business to combat what could potentially hurt or be used to benefit the overall experience of the visitors.

With the help of the *Leximancer* software, tags were set up on the previously seen concept map. These tags appear outside the clusters and link to the concepts that are related to each of the four elements of the SWOT analysis: strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. On an Excel sheet with every single comment that is being analysed for this study, each of the 80 concepts were searched for, as we tried to understand in what context and why the word had been used. The attribution of the concepts to each of the components of this SWOT analysis was also decided based on how often these words appeared on positive and negative reviews.

Strengths	Weaknesses
• WWII • Aircraft • Amazing • Audio • Beautiful • Best • Building • Castle • Children • Collection • Different • Displays • Down • Easy • Enjoyed • Excellent • Exhibits • Experience • Fascinating • Floor • Free • Friendly • Full • Guide • History • Hours • Impressive • Including • Information • Inside • Interesting • Items • Large • Life • Look • Main • Memorial • Military • Museum • Old • Past • Place • Real • Recommend • Rooms • Ship • Site • Staff • Story • Sake • Thought • Time • Tour • Trip • Tunnels • Underground • Used • Visits • Visitors • Walk • War • Work • World • Worth	• Cafe • Entrance • Food • Need • Outside • People • Shop • Ticket
Opportunities	Threats
• Area • Nice • Views	• Bus • Car • City • Long

Figure 6 - SWOT analysis of Military Museums comments.

From what we can see in Figure 6, the *TripAdvisor* comments were a lot more focused on the internal factors rather than the exterior ones. Overall, visitors used this online review platform to give their opinion on their personal experience inside the tourist sites and very rarely did they comment on the exterior of the museums, making it harder to identify possible opportunities and threats.

Without a doubt there are more strengths identified than any other element of the SWOT analysis. Out of the 80 concepts, 64 were considered to be related to the positive interior aspects of the military museums. Adjectives such as “interesting”, “impressive”, “fascinating”, “excellent”, “beautiful” and “amazing” were often utilized to describe the military exhibits and the rooms inside the museums:

“(...) Absolutely fascinating place, incredible history and very evocative. Superb tour guide as well who brought the place to life. Thoroughly recommended.”

“Fascinating museum with such an amazing collection. If you haven't been recently it has been superbly updated. Does a great job of informing without glorifying War.”

“I won't talk about the exhibits in this review except to say that they were exceptional. I really just wanted to mention how cheerful, friendly and knowledgeable the staff were, it really made our trip.”

However, and as expected, not all opinions were favourable, especially in regard to certain features of the museums. The concepts such as “café”, “food”, “shop” and “ticket” were negatively seen by the visitors, and therefore considered to be weaknesses in the military museums. When it comes to the cafe that most museums have as a complementary service, tourists complained about how expensive and low quality the food and overall service was:

“The quality of the exhibitions is superb. The only complaint is the cafe which is terrible, a lack of choice and quality.”

“The Museum and it's attractions and activities are excellent, well presented, spacious and informative. The food in the cafeteria is terrible! It's overpriced, poor quality and service is very slow.”

“It is expensive and, if it is to be able to continue, it needs to be able to attract more visitors so needs to be cheaper.”

“Slightly more expensive than other attractions in the area but definitely worth it. Make sure you go in the guided tour which is included in the ticket.”

As mentioned previously, there were barely any comments regarding the exterior factors: opportunities and threats. However, the concepts that were related to the opportunities were mostly linked to the location and area around them. Words such as “views” and “area” were identified as being opportunities that could be beneficial for the military museums that were analysed. Some comments with these words include:

“We visited in winter and the views were wonderful with the area covered in snow.”

“The views are incredible and it’s a great place to spend the day.”

Lastly, the concepts mostly used to identify what could threats for military museums were related to the means of transportation, especially to how far from the main city centre’s most of these museums are located and how expensive the parking can be:

“The only draw back for those driving to the site is the car parking charges , a full day in the Dockyard 10.00 to 17.00hrs in the carpark will cost you £9”

“The museum is beautiful, but what a shame is far from the city center by bus. Going by car is the best option, but much more expensive.”

4. Discussion

While studies with bibliometric analysis had already been made in relation to similar topics such as in dark tourism (Ogretmenoglu *et al.*, 2021; Fauzi, 2023), there was yet to exist one regarding Military Tourism solely. Since we were able to understand the main differences between Military Tourism, Dark Tourism and Heritage Tourism, it was possible to identify what articles belong to this topic.

The first findings of this study are able to confirm the previously mentioned rise of popularity in Military Tourism. The bibliometric analysis allowed us to see the publication trends over the years, showing that around half of the studies were published in the last 5 years. This finding pairs with Zienkiewicz *et al.*'s study (2021) where it was identified a steady growth of Military Tourism, with military tourists becoming more common in the overall tourist sector. Zienkiewicz *et al.*'s study (2021) also identified Poland as a country where Military Tourism is starting to occupy a very important place in the tourism sector of the country, as many tourists are traveling to this destination to visit historic sites and military bases. This information is able to link with this study's finding that Poland is one of the countries where most articles related to Military Tourism have been published, along with the United States, United Kingdom and Australia.

After the prior bibliometric analysis, this dissertation went into more detail and organized the content with the use of the TCM and ADO frameworks, which have previously been applied in articles related to other forms of tourism. In Dias *et al.*'s study (2022), the TCM and ADO frameworks were utilized to analyse Eco-Tourism, where some similarities were found with this study. In both studies, two of the most used methodologies were "case studies" and "content analysis", which makes us understand that in the tourism sector, these methods make the most sense to be used. Still in regard to the TCM and ADO frameworks, important models and theories were found in Military Tourism related articles. However, there are other equally important ones that have been used to understand certain behaviours in this field. The *Place Attachment Theory*, for example, explains how people feel attached to a certain place that they have visited, and it was used in Dwyer *et al.*'s study (2019). Although it was not found in the selected studies for this dissertation, this theory can easily be associated to Military Tourism, as it was found that "place attachment" is one of the outcomes when participating in this niche type of tourism.

As there is a gap in literature regarding bibliometric analysis in Military Tourism, there is also a lack of studies related to the most important aspects of military museums, which makes it harder to compare the findings of this study to previous conclusions. The use of *Leximancer*

however, complements Goh and Wilk's study (2022) by showing that using online reviews, in this case from *TripAdvisor*, offers validity for decision making. Just like in these scholars' study, the use of the *Leximancer* concept map allows managers to see a visual representation of the most important concepts related to the issues in question. It also counterparts with the same study, that previously stated that there is a need to use *Leximancer* to explore other niche types of tourism in future studies, which is the case of Military Tourism, specifically, military museums.

5. Conclusion

For this study, 78 studies that talk about Military Tourism were identified. These articles along with the bibliometric analysis that was conducted helped answer the first four established research questions. First and foremost, this study was able to identify the publication trends over the years, concluding that although this topic is still very recent in the literature domain, it has been growing over the last decades, which tells us that there are many more studies regarding this topic coming in the next years. Even though the *Journal of Heritage Tourism* counts with the highest number of articles published regarding this topic, the *Annals of Tourism Research* is the journal with the most citations in our study, meaning that they are both considered to be the most influential ones. In this first phase, it also considered the number of articles based on the authors' geographical region to find out where most articles had been published. It was found that *North America*, *Europe* and the *Pacific* concentrate the highest number of Military Tourism articles published.

After finding out the article with the most citations, it was also discovered that Hartmann R. was the most influential author based on the number of citations (161). With three articles published out of the seventy-eight from our sample, Hall J. and Lockstone-Binney L. were furthermore considered to be the most influential authors based on how many articles each author had published.

This study then used two frameworks that helped organize the data for a better understanding of previous literature: the TCM and the ADO frameworks. Their use made the study more complete and it offered a clearer way to see the outtakes from the articles chosen for the bibliometric analysis. With the use of the ADO framework, the study answered the question “*How has the theme Military Tourism evolve in literature through its antecedents, decisions and outcomes?*” and we were able to identify antecedents (reasons as to why someone would engage with Military Tourism), decisions (what makes them choose one military event or site instead of another) and outcomes (what are the consequences/impacts of this type of tourism) in previous literature regarding this topic. As we identified several reasons as to why a tourist would want to participate in Military Tourism, we divided them in two categories: personal and educational. It was concluded that tourists participate in this specific type of tourism mostly due to “family connections”, “childhood memories” and “military backgrounds”. However, the “revived interest of war sites all over the world”, “feeling drawn to excitement”, the “desire for novel experiences”, and “affirming personal beliefs” are also the personal reasons found in literature. Moreover, educational antecedents were also identified as mentioned previously, such as “learning about a specific war, the past or different cultures”,

“storytelling”, to get a “patriotic education” and to perfect “critical thinking”. It was also with the use of the ADO framework that we found the criteria that makes tourists decide what activity or place to go when wanting to engage or take part in Military Tourism. Previous literature shown us that aspects such as “destination image”, “innovation”, “accuracy”, “safety”, “quality”, “authenticity”, “information available” and “empathy” are extremely important for tourists when making a final decision of going to a certain military site or activity. Lastly, the ADO framework let us organize the outcomes of military tourism. Most of the impacts are closely related to the antecedents, such as the growing of a “patriotic instinct”, “self-development” and a better “sense of belonging, identity and national heritage”. Other impacts that are extremely important and stated in previous studies are “local economic development” and “overall tourism development”, and also “heritage preservation and protection”.

Using the TCM framework in this study was crucial to identify the theories and models that have been used in previous literature, as well as contexts (countries and the population) in which the literature focused on, and the methods that were used. Researchers of Military Tourism used theories and models related to people’s behaviour to understand the tourists’ comportment towards Military Tourism, such as the *Theory of Planned Behaviour* and the *Experience Behavioural Model*, as well as models and theories related specifically to the tourism area, such as the *Heritage Trails Model* and the *Thanatourism Motivation Model*. The TCM framework also helped us conclude that the main targets of Military Tourism studies were “university students”, “tourism operators”, “battlefield tourists” and “museum directors” in regard to the population, and countries such as Poland, Germany, South Africa and the United States of America due to their extensive list of battles and wars and how impactful it was to the history of the world. In order to follow out previous studies and come to important conclusions, previous researchers used certain quantitative, qualitative and mixed methodologies. This study concluded that *interviews*, *case studies* and *questionnaires* were the most used ones.

The qualitative research sought to answer the last research question: “*How are military museums perceived by the public?*” that arose after finding evidence of controversy in military museums. The answer came through an analysis of 500 reviews from *TripAdvisor* of 35 military museums in Europe. The analysis identified three main themes in a *Leximancer* concept map as we’ve seen previously: “museum”, “tour” and “staff”.

One of the present study’s main contribution to the literature is an in-depth understanding of military museums’ aspects from the visitors’ perspective. We were able to understand what

aspects of the museums were most talked about, and consequently what people considered to be the most important part about the experience. In the “museum” cluster, where topics related to the exhibitions and collections presented in the museums and how visitors felt about the museum as whole were covered, we were able to conclude that military museums mostly make a good impression by portraying parts of Europe’s history as it happened. The second cluster, the “tour” concepts were mainly related to the tours offered by many of these museums. Visitors agreed that, apart from being well organized, this part of the museum is very educational and fun for people of all ages and with all sorts of interests. In the “staff” cluster, and the last one, the topics covered were mainly related to the people that work at both the museum and the complementary shops, as well as to the means of transportation and the prices. Based on these reviews, we can conclude that the staff is friendly and attentive, but the overall prices of the tickets, the shops and the cafes are more expensive than what visitors were expecting.

These comments led to a more profound analysis and it was important to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis) of military museums. The more positive perceptions appeared in context with the museums as an experience, and also regarding its exhibitions, displays, the layouts, the tours that most of them include, and the staff. The not so positive insights, considered to be the weaknesses of military museums, centred around the secondary businesses inside these museums, such as the shop and the cafes. As we have seen before, many were the comments that stated how expensive these services were, which made certain visitors second guess their overall experience. When it comes to the price of the tickets, although many stated how expensive they thought it was at first, some visitors agree that it was worth the money. Nevertheless, military museums should be aware that not everyone can afford such high prices.

When it comes to the external factors of the military museums, not as many conclusions could be taken. However, we can identify the area around the museums and the beautiful scenery often mention as an opportunity to benefit or complement the visitors’ experience. It would be of value if when promoting the museums, the areas around them were also included as “one of the things to see”. The threats identified were mainly related to how far from the main cities most of these museums are situated in. Based on this SWOT analysis, we determine that the visitors have a much more positive opinion regarding military museums overall rather than a negative one.

As mentioned previously, this study tried to understand whether visitors actively consider the possible controversies and debates raised in military museums. The findings of this study

suggest that visitors are more focused on the overall experience of their visit rather than dwelling on potential controversies. Even while they may be aware of these issues, military museum visitors tend to prioritize the positive aspects of their experience.

5.1 Contributions

This study will contribute to numerous important aspects. First and foremost, this study will guide future scholars in conducting more targeted investigations and contribute to a better understanding of Military Tourism and its associated phenomena. Synthesizing the bibliometric analysis with the TCM and ADO frameworks will make it easier for researchers to understand what has been studied and what really needs to be further developed. Adding to this, this study will also contribute to the academic and overall knowledge and understanding of Military Tourism by showing aspects such as motivations, impacts and behaviours in this type of tourism.

The use of the *Leximancer* concept map in this study enables an overview of the most relevant and important aspects of military museums, that will guide future researchers to focus on critical areas that are stated in this study. After developing a SWOT analysis based on the visitors' opinions regarding military museums, the findings of this study allow the directors to pay attention to the opinion and the sentiments expressed by visitors. This will lead them to develop better strategies that will cater to the tourists' needs and preferences, which could potentially bring more visitors as it enhances their satisfaction and engagement.

5.2 Limitations and Recommendations

Even though this dissertation is useful to get an overview of the previous research made on Military Tourism and on the opinions that visitors have about military museums in Europe, there are still a few limitations in the present study that should be considered.

Concerning the bibliometric analysis, the information presented in this dissertation was taken and analysed from the *Scopus* database only, meaning that certain academic publications were left out by not being part of this database. There are other equally important and reliable databases, such as *Web of Science* for example, that might have excellent publications and that are not included in *Scopus*. Additionally, this study only considered documents in English and excluded Non-English works, which means that important information may have been left out and future research should look into the content of publications posted in other languages.

In regard to the ADO and TCM frameworks, it is essential to note that most studies were focused on specific topics, places and different ways of engaging in Military Tourism. Therefore, the conclusions were not based on this type of tourism as whole, but to specific countries, museums, battlefields and other Military Tourism events. In future research, it would be important to understand the social and economic impact that Military Tourism has overall.

When it comes to the content analysis in the methodology, it is important to consider that the research only focused on a single online review platform (*TripAdvisor*). In a future research, it would be interesting to use not only other platforms that are similar to the chosen one, but also social media platforms, such as Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, to compare online content shared by travellers. This could result in a more accurate and complete result, as not every single visitor uses *TripAdvisor* and rather uses other platforms to share their opinion. Adding to this, it is important to note that only 500 reviews from each museum were used, and all museums were situated in Europe, meaning that the opinions of the visitors that commented on *TripAdvisor* are only based in one continent and not every single comment was taken in consideration. Moreover, it is factual that online reviews may underrepresent some types of travellers, such as the moderately satisfied visitors. In future studies, it would be of value if military museums were studied in depth by regions or by museum themes, and if primary data collection methods, such as surveys, were applied.

6. Bibliography

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